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CIRCULAR HISTORY

--- OF AN ---

IOWA PEACH.

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Why, Where and How We Grow 'Em.

A. BRANSON,
NEW SHARON NURSERIES,
New Sharon, Iowa.

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1897

THE WHY, WHERE AND HOW.



The WHY, because on the following pages we show you that a remarkably hardy variety of peach trees have gone through our most severe winters unprotected for over sixty years, and yet are alive and bearing fruit abundantly.

WHERE, in Iowa as far north as the forty-second degree north latitude.

HOW WE GROW 'EM, by planting this Friday seedling on good high land, giving proper cultivation and cutting back annually.

A. Branson is one of the directors of the State Horticultural Society, also appointed in 1896 to take charge of the new Experimental Station of Mahaska County; he is also a Director of the Southeastern Iowa Horticultural Society.

EDITORIAL EXTRACT.

Davenport Republican, January 5, 1897: In another department is published an article by Mr. A. Branson, of New Sharon, Iowa, whose effort in the line of peach culture has been referred to by the editor of our "Farm and Garden," and whose work as a horticulturist is widely known throughout the State, particularly in Southeastern Iowa. Mr. Branson describes the way in which he traced back the history of this seedling peach to the farm in this county which Charles Jacob Friday settled upon in 1836, now owned by his son, John. * * The peach grown on the Friday farm is well known among fruit growers in the vicinity of Davenport. It is raised by a great many farmers in this and adjoining counties. * * It is a most valuable peach, and the fact that its usefulness should be discovered in widely different neighborhoods, and then traced to the same parent orchard, is a proof that it is worthy to be widely cultivated.

HISTORY.

Although the peach tree is said to be a native of Persia and China, it appears to be well adapted to a large part of the United States. It has been considered to be more tender and shorter lived than most of the orchard fruits grown in temperate climes, but to the contrary we have a remarkable instance to record of some Iowa seedling peach trees. In the early settlement of Iowa



PEACH TREES IN 1836.

there were seedling peaches grown at several points in the south half of the state, but the destructive winters of 1855-56 and 1856-57 killed these so that little interest was taken in peach-growing for several years. Coming as I did with my parents from Ohio in 1853 and settling in Cedar county, I had some knowledge of these winters which destroyed most of the fruit trees planted. In 1867 we established the West Branch Fruit Farm and Nursery, but at that time few attempts were made to grow peaches as there were but few of our hardiest apple trees we thought we could grow with profit. We had relatives and friends living in Muscatine county, and occasionally visited there and as we were always on the lookout to learn what we could of valuable fruits, we found in the garden of Isaiah Stanley a few seedling peach trees that were reported fruitful, hardy and a delicious free stone. In the fall of 1882 the Stanleys came to visit their granddaughter at our home. On this visit they told of the wonderful crop of peaches, forty bushels they had picked that fall from their few seedling trees, that the fruit was the same from all the trees, and that they had brought us some of the pits to plant. I planted these and with good cultivation they grew over four feet high that season, and matured the wood well. When these trees were two years old we had another test winter. December, 1884, shows $19\frac{1}{2}$, January, 1885, $34\frac{1}{2}$ and February, 1885, 30 below zero (according to the weather report kept by J. P. Walton, Muscatine, Iowa) and notwithstanding this extreme cold weather these trees were but slightly damaged; not a single tree, as I remember, was killed, yet I remember of having some Rambo apple trees in nursery row, not two rods away, that were killed root and branch. This led me to believe this was a remarkably hardy peach tree.

My first crop was in the fall of 1889 when every tree on my place (all of these seedlings) fruited abundantly, and have produced a light or heavy crop each year since with but two exceptions.

We moved from Cedar county to Mahaska county in the fall of 1892. About a year after it came to my mind to look up the history of this peach. I had learned that Mr. Stanley had procured his seed or pits of his neighbour, William Stutsman. I therefore wrote this gentleman and received the answer that he had procured the pits from the Jacob Friday farm in Scott

county and that he believed Mr. Friday was then living in Iowa City. I therefore wrote to H. W. Lathrop, a long-time resident of that place and member of our Horticultural Society, to procure, if possible, the early history. Mr. Lathrop found Jacob Friday and reported that he had "bought a farm in Scott county in 1851 upon which there were growing three peach trees and that during the thirty-eight years he spent on this



farm, these three trees and those *SHE FILLED HIS POCKETS WITH PEACHES.* propagated from them had seldom failed to produce a crop except during the seasons following our most severe winters. I afterwards visited the Mr. Stutsman orchard in Muscatine county and learned that his son had married the daughter of Jacob Friday, then living in Scott county, and that on his return home at one time when he went to see her in peach time, she filled his pockets with peaches. On reaching his home in Muscatine county young Stutsman divided these peaches with the family; the mother saved the pits and they were planted; when three or four years old they fruited, again the pits were saved and the orchard extended. This family being liberal, the neighbors had their full share of these delicious peaches, and they planting the pits soon grew their own peaches.

In December, 1894, I read a paper at the Southeastern Iowa Horticultural Society, entitled "The History of An Iowa Peach," tracing the history to the Jacob Friday farm in 1851. The following fall our friend and fellow fruit-grower, N. K. Fluke, of Scott county, learning that there were peaches on the Friday farm, drove out one day and in conversation with Mr. Friday received the following history:

"Mr. John Friday, 75 years old, now living on the old place, came to Iowa with his father (long since dead) in the year 1836, from Indiana, in a two-horse wagon, and then took up the land now occupied by his son.

The father being a great lover of fruit, brought apple, pear and peach seeds with them, and planted in nursery rows. Two years after they planted out an orchard of the seedling apples; some of them are still standing, but mostly of worthless fruit. At the same time they planted thirty or thirty-five of the peach trees around a piece of ground still used for garden purposes, which I saw bearing full this year. He tells me the trees have been weakened by overbearing and severe cold weather, and have been cut off twice during this time, but have renewed themselves from the stump each time. (These winters were no doubt the very severe winters of 1856-57 and that of 1884-85.) These trees have borne forty bushels of peaches the present year. They have a very small pit compared to the size of the fruit; smaller than any freestone seedling (home

grown) that I have seen. The old Friday farm and the Jacob Friday farm join each other, and are on timber soils on the bluffs of the Mississippi, about two miles from the river. The timber was nearly all cleared off for farming purposes many years ago, and the trees are no more protected than on our average prairie farms in the county. Other peach trees under the same conditions, the same distance above Davenport, bore no fruit at all, while those below, not six miles distant, were heavily laden. How much or how little our late spring freeze had to do with the results is hard to determine, but as there were very few peaches grown here except in this neighborhood, it looks as if these seedlings could stand more atmospheric changes than many others. Those on the old place, although nearly sixty years have passed since the pits were planted, are still producing fruit.

Mr. Friday thinks the trees grown on his brother Jacob's and his neighbor's farms were grown from pits originally taken from the trees his father planted. Whether worthy or not, this peach should have a name to distinguish it from others. Why not christen it the Friday Seedling peach, as they no doubt were the first growers of it, as far back as it can be traced?

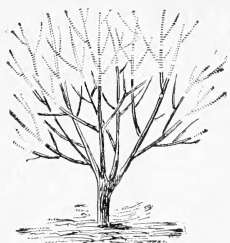
The writer visited this John Friday farm in the fall of 1896 and found the old peach trees, past sixty years old, yet in good shape, having produced a good crop the past fall. Mr. Friday, now 77 years old, stated he has lived on this farm since his father Charles Jacob Friday came from Indiana in 1836; he also said he believed these trees have produced at least three crops out of five since they first began to bear.

From close observation I find this seedling peach growing in at least five different counties in Iowa. The growth of the tree and leaf are distinct. I also find the fruit from these different counties ripen about the same time. I believe they can all be traced to the same original trees.

MANY ARE LED to the conclusion from the selection of the light, sandy soil for the planting of peach orchards in New Jersey and Delaware that this is the most suitable soil for the peach, but the short duration of the trees in these and similar districts goes to prove these locations are not the best adapted to the peach.

To the contrary, the rich, mellow loams, containing but little, if any sand, produce as fine and well-developed fruit and the trees live and endure much longer. Therefore the high locations and best, rich lands of the south half of Iowa are well suited for peach growing. Another advantage we have in the north is we seldom have weather warm enough to swell the buds of the peach trees during the winter, while further south it often happens and freezing weather follows and kills the entire crop.

We plant rows sixteen to twenty feet apart north and south, ten to twelve feet in the row, or put in every alternate tree in an apple orchard. Cultivate to corn or some hoed crop for two or three years or plant small fruits between rows.



We consider the most important factor after selecting hardy varieties of trees to succeed, is the proper trimming or cutting back. This is done by cutting out each spring about the time the buds begin to swell (see cut) at least one half and we prefer two thirds of the previous year's growth. This is continued until the trees come into full bearing and the trees are well formed. This checks the upward growth or sappy part and tends to form early, well matured fruit-buds. We find by observation that on all fruit trees the limbs nearest horizontal are the first to mature fruit-buds and shed their leaves early. This manner of trimming gives more sunlight, better coloring and ripening of fruit, keeps tree near the ground where fruit can be thinned and picked to much better advantage.

TESTIMONIALS.

MUSCATINE COUNTY.

We have 14 of these seedling peach trees 4 years old that bore in 1895, and last fall at 5 years old they had a heavy crop; 15 trees 12 years planted bore exceedingly heavy last fall, all of excellent quality. This variety was first grown in this neighborhood on my father's farm from seed of some peaches brought from the Friday farm in Scott Co. about the year 1869. Yours truly,
Jan. 21, 1897. A. M. STUTSMAN.

About the year 1875 my grandfather, Isaiah Stanley, received some peaches they called the Home Peach of Mr. Wm. Stutsman, which were considered a delicious free stone peach. Grandfather planted the seed in the garden and when these trees were 3 or 4 years old they fruited. In 1882 they bore a very heavy crop. They sold thirty bushels, canned 100 quarts, made some peach butter, as well as ate and gave away a great many. The peaches from these seedling trees appeared to be all alike. With the exception of six years, I have lived on this place since infancy and as near as I can remember there have been peaches 5 years out of 6 during this time. Respectfully,
Jan. 20, 1897. ETTA C. BARNHART.

MAHASKA COUNTY.

In the year 1864 or '65, when living in Scott Co., the Westfalls gave me some peach trees they called the Wild Peach. In a few years we had peaches and I planted the seed and they produced the same free stone peach as the old trees. We had peaches the greater part of the time and sold all we had to sell at \$3.00 per bushel. We sold our farm and moved to Mahaska County in 1881 and brought some of these trees with us and they have fruited almost every year since they commenced to bear. Yours truly,
DAVID VANNES.

Oskaloosa, Iowa.

We planted one of Mr. Branson's seedling peach trees on our lot in 1893. In '95 we had some fine samples, and in 1896 1½ bushels of very fine peaches of excellent quality. Truly,
Feb. 15th, '97. SAML. KNOWLTON.

We moved from Scott Co. to Pleasant Grove Tp., Mahaska Co., in 1871 and brought a shot sack of peach pits with us, which we planted in spring of 1872. Some of these seedlings had peaches on in September, 1875. We again planted these pits which bore at 4 years old. These trees have continued to bear since most of the time. These are of excellent quality, medium size, free stone peach. Trees are hardy, did not kill down when the Ben Davis apple trees killed. In 1895 we had over 40 bushels, after hail battered and knocked off more than half of the young peaches. Lastfall we sold about 45 bushels besides what we used in the family. Propagates itself true. I am unable to detect any difference in the fruit or time of ripening of the last planted trees from those planted 25 years ago. Respectfully,
Jan. 21, 1897. Z. T. MIDDLETON.

JASPER COUNTY, IOWA.

About twenty years ago we made a visit to Scott County, and on returning we brought home with us about a half bushel of peaches that grew there. We saved the seed and planted them and we believe they commenced to bear when three or four years old and have produced a good crop nearly every year since. They have not failed since 1890. We have been selling all we have to spare, at \$2.00 per bushel. In 1895 we sold over \$40.00 worth from the few trees we have in our garden.

Dec. 18th, 1896.

Your friend,

FIDELIA LAMBERT.

CEDAR COUNTY.

I hereby certify that I bought the West Branch Nursery and Fruit Farm of A. Branson; that in the spring of 1895 the Friday or Bailey seedling peach trees blossomed and set a fair crop of peaches, but most of the peaches were frozen by the unusual freeze in May. In 1896 they were very full. I had to prop up some of the trees. I took some of them to the State Fair, and the committee on awards seemed to use them as the standard of excellence, comparing all others with them as to quality and failed to pronounce any other kind superior to them in that respect.

Respectfully,

ELWOOD TATUM.

West Branch, Iowa, Jan. 12, '97.

The peaches alluded to in testimonials below were picked September 12th, 1895:

Prof. Pammel says: I received a few days ago the basket of peaches. When they reached me they were a little past their season. I let Prof. Budd, Mr. Sexton, and eight or nine other people test the peach, and they all pronounced it excellent. I think that this new seedling will prove a most excellent thing for Iowa. * * * * Yours truly,

Ames, Iowa, Sept. 25th, 1895.

L. H. PAMMEL.

The peach came to hand yesterday. It was in fairly good shape and of quality good enough, so that we found but one grave fault with it, and that was that there was not a bushel of them, so that all the kids could each have one apiece. Could you send me a few yearlings to test here on this edge of the world? Wishing you success, I remain,

Yours truly,

Storm Lake, Iowa, Sept. 22nd, 1895.

P. F. KINNE.

Your peach reached me in good condition; the quality is good. If the tree stands our winters with you, it is certainly valuable in Iowa. I think it should be propagated and sold to every farmer in Iowa.

Yours truly,

Corning, Iowa, Oct. 1st, 1895.

A. F. COLLMAN,

The specimens of the Bailey peach were received nearly two weeks ago, and their keeping quality has been pretty well tested by the fact that I have just sampled the last one, which was perfectly sound at this date. The fruit was not prepossessing in appearance, because of its early picking, no doubt, but its flavor was better than I would naturally expect of a seedling. * * * In size I should think it above the ordinary seedling. Being a freestone its value is enhanced for culinary use, and my wife thinks it would make an excellent peach for canning. This peach will surely fill an important place in our orchards in this part of the State. If we can grow peaches without winter protection we will have gained a good start.

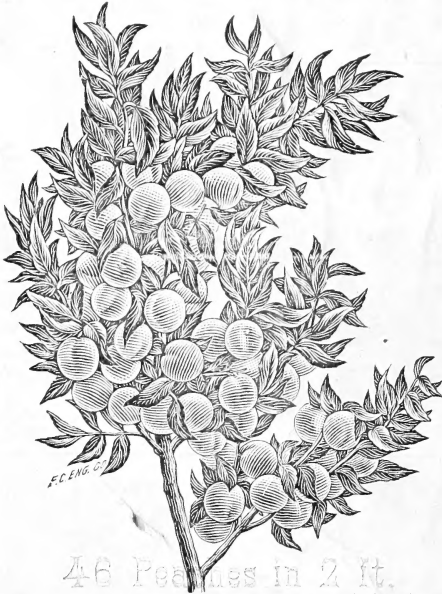
Yours truly,
Council Bluffs, Iowa, Sept. 22, 1894.

L. O. WILLIAMS.

I see no reason why, with such a hardy variety as the "Bailey Seedling," the fruit growers in the south three-fourths of the State can not, before the advent of the next century, raise all the peaches needed by Iowa's two millions of people, besides supplying an abundance to their neighbors on the north and northwest.

Iowa City, March, 1894.

H. W. LATHROP.



TO THE PUBLIC.

OUR STOCK of *Friday*, or Bailey, *Seedling Peach Trees* is much larger than ever before and we quote *prices very low*. These trees are grown from seed mostly several generations removed from the original trees. We are the introducers of this peach as we were the first to propagate it for general planting. We sold J. I. Bailey, of West Branch, five peach trees of these seedlings in the spring of 1885. At the meeting of the Southeastern Iowa Horticultural Society in 1892, it was named the "Bailey Seedling." Afterwards it was found that for fifty years previously it had been known as the "Friday Seedling," therefore

they should be called by the original name. This tree has never been known to be affected by any disease.

Price per tree, 3½ to 5 ft.,	3 for..	\$ 1.00.
" " " " " "	6 "	1.75.
" " " " " "	12 "	3.50.
" " " " " "	100 "	20.00.
" " " 2 " 3½ ft.		¾ price of above.

Remit by P. O. Money Order, or by Bank Draft. Grown and for sale by

A. BRANSON, New Sharon, Iowa.

Also a General Supply of Nursery Stock, true to Name and at Low Prices.